

**Department of Transportation
Project No. 14-177
Replacement of Bridge No 02675
Town of Branford**

**April 21, 2015 at 7:00 PM
Fire Department Headquarters
45 North Main Street
Branford, CT.**

Minutes

Present:

From DOT:

Theodore Nezames
Louis Bacho
Lesgie Ruiz
Mike Marzi
Kevin Carifa
Jeff Knapp

From DEEP:

Mike Grzywinski
Harry Yamalis

From Westin and Sampson:

Peter Grandy

From CJM:

Tom Ryan
Sal Cugno

Presentation:

Project Handouts and a sign in sheet were provided at the entrance for all those attending. There were approximately 60 people attending including local officials and the public. The presentation was started promptly at 7:00 PM by Ms. Lesgie Ruiz with a welcoming statement and an introduction of the project and the personnel immediately involved with the design. She followed it with a brief explanation of the conditions of the site. She then handed the presentation to Mr. Sal Cugno.

Mr. Cugno then proceeded to present the needs for the project, the existing conditions of the bridge and approaching roadways, as well as the proposed design and the impacts derived from it.

The major points of the design presented are as follows:

- Existing bridge is in poor condition due to superstructure and substructure
- Existing road is Functionally Obsolete. Has an ADT of 4,900 vehicles (2013 ADT). The existing curb to curb width is 22 ft and will be increased to 34 ft.
- Proposed bridge will consist of a 10 ft x 7 ft precast concrete box culvert
- Realignment of the Linden Avenue intersection as requested by the Town
- New tide gates to control tidal flows will be built as part of this project

- Construction of the tide gates and supports will be accomplished utilizing off peak lane closures with police protection as required.
- Proposed culvert will be constructed utilizing a 2 week road closure and traffic detour utilizing local roads
- Construction is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2016 and be completed in the spring of 2017
- Permits required will be DEEP OLISP Certificate of Permission, Flood Management Certification and ACOE General Permit
- There are existing overhead and underground utilities that will require relocation and support during construction
- Partial takes along with permanent easements, slope easements and construction easements will be required for the project.

At this point Mr. Mike Marzi from DOT ROW gave a presentation explaining the process to acquire property for the project.

At the end of Mr. Marzi's presentation, Mr. Cugno resumed with the end of the presentation by providing the estimated cost of the project at this time of \$2,800,000 and the projected schedule as delineated above along with Ms. Lesgie Ruiz's contact information for all those interested in contacting the Department for further information.

AT this point the presentation was concluded and Mr. Cugno opened the floor for a questions and answer period.

Public Comments and Questions: The majority of the comments were directed to the safety aspect of the project, primarily with the addition of sidewalks for pedestrians.

The main questions were as follows:

A resident commented on the poor visibility heading north on Route 146 as it approaches the bridge citing and existing stone masonry decorative wall as the main impediment to the sight line

- A resident commented on the poor visibility on Route 146 heading north as it approaches the bridge due to an existing decorative stone masonry wall along the edge of the road that is part of a private business;

Response: Mr. Cugno explained that the existing sight line will be increased by the proposed widening of the road and the new lane realignment. Further, the Department cannot simply take a wall at this location as it will render the business unserviceable and the entire property may need to be taken

- A resident commented that the sidewalk being provided on the west side of the road is Ok but it is needed more on the east side of the road and the one being provided under this design is too short

Response: Mr. Cugno indicated that the sidewalk on the west side is being provided due to the area created by the realignment of the Linden Avenue intersection as required by the Town. The east side sidewalk provide matches the existing sidewalk, the Department will look at extending it to the north to the limit of the project, but it cannot be extended to the south due to the existing private wall.

- A resident commented on the availability of emergency services when the roadway is closed for the detour.
Response: Mr. Cugno indicated that arrangements have been made with the Town to have emergency services coverage on both sides of the detour. Ms Janice Plaziak from the Town's Engineering office indicated that the fire house would be manned by the people during the detour time and also an ambulance would also be stationed at the fire house.
- Mr. Perry Maresca of the Branford Economic Development Commissions again stressed the need for sidewalks in the area as they want to make this area a walk friendly part of the town with the presence of the existing businesses especially in the summer season.
Response: Mr. Cugno responded that the Department will take a further look at the sidewalk situation within the confines and context of the proposed project. He indicated that the project is a bridge project using bridge funding and therefore they need to be spent focusing on the bridge rather than site enhancements.
- A resident commented on the appearance of the proposed bridge indicating that possibly timber or other aesthetic enhancements should be incorporated into the project at this location.
Response: Mr. Cugno explained that the project as presented is preliminary at this point and the reason for the meeting is to get the public's point of view so their ideas can be taken into account in the design. Mr. Cugno indicated that the concrete part of the wall can be formed to resemble stone work. Ms. Plaziak interjected and indicated that the Town had requested an open rail which would allow tidal water over the road to flow better. Mr. Cugno indicated that an open rail can be provided but that it would also extend the limits of impacts for protection of the rail by adding end blocks. He indicated that they would take a look and incorporate the open rail.
- A resident commented on the impacts to the existing wetlands vegetation and what is being done to better the environmental aspect of the project.
Response: Mr. Cugno indicated that the project will require environmental mitigation and then turned the response to Mr. Grzywinski who indicated that the construction of the new tide gates will also promote the control of invasive phragmites as they diminish in the presence of saline water.
- A resident asked if the tidal flow elevations on the downstream side of the bridge would be lowered by opening the tide gates further allowing more water to reach the upstream side of the bridge.
Response: Mr. Yamalis of DEEP interjected and responded to the question indicating that the volume of water coming from the Sound is a massive amount of water and our project is subject to that surge, therefore our project will have no impact on the tidal flows approaching the bridge, even fully opening the tide gates will not alter the approach tide elevations as the two areas in question are so different in size.

Adjournment: At this point more comments followed on the sidewalk issue and Ms. Ruiz and Mr. Cugno asked if there were any other questions. As there were no more questions, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM with a thank you to those who attended the meeting

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